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HOUSEKEEPERS' CHAT

Friday, May 18, 1934.

(FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY)

Subject: "An After-Church Sunday Dinner." Information from the Bureau of Home Economics, U.S.D.A.

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For some women in this world, Sunday is a nightmare instead of a day of rest. That hard-and-fast custom known as the Great American Sunday-noon dinner has done more to make the first day of the week a weary day for Mother than anything else I can think of. While the rest of the family sleep, she rises early to make her pies or puddings before church. Then, after church, she has to dash home and slave away in the kitchen for a couple of hours while Father sits at ease reading the Sunday paper and the youngsters make merry on the back veranda. And after dinner come the dishes -- all those dishes to fill up a Sunday afternoon.

Well, the only person to remedy this situation is Mother herself. If the Great American Sunday dinner must continue, then Mother better see what she can do about the menu to save all this toil on the Sabbath. There are two good ways that she can lighten her Sunday load. One is to plan a menu which will allow most of the preparations to be done on Saturday. The second is to plan a menu of quick-cooking food that she can get together the last minute. The choice of quick-cooking food is somewhat limited, especially when you are interested in serving meals that don't cost too much. But the number of dishes that you can prepare the day before are numerous and many of them inexpensive. If you have an ample refrigerator, you can fix most of your Sunday meal on Saturday and in that rush time after church you won't have to do more than the small last-minute jobs.

One class of dishes will do a lot to ease your Sunday work during the summer. These are the gelatin dishes -- gelatin appetizers, gelatin salads, gelatin desserts. They are some of our most attractive dishes if they are properly made. And they're especially welcome in warm weather because they look and taste refreshingly cool. If you prepare a gelatin salad, for example, on Saturday and put it away in the refrigerator, there it is, all ready to be turned out on a bed of crisp salad leaves and served. The same is true of the various gelatin puddings. They're some of the most helpful desserts for saving time and labor on Sunday noon.

By the way, before I leave the subject of salads, maybe we should say a word about fixing the salad greens in advance. If you wash your lettuce or other greens when it comes from the market or the garden, and then put it in a covered container in the refrigerator, you'll have cold, crisp, fresh leaves all ready when you want them. The same is true of celery and radishes and any other



vegetable that you serve raw. Keep them cold, crisp and clean in a covered container in the ice box. Fix them Friday or Saturday and they'll be ready and waiting for you on Sunday.

And salad dressing. There's another advance job. Make your salad dressing in large amounts, enough for several meals instead of for just one serving. Keep French dressing in a bottle in the refrigerator -- a bottle with a tight stopper so that you can shake it before serving. Keep mayonnaise in a covered jar. One point to remember about storing home-made mayonnaise -- it often curdles on standing at a very cold temperature. So the warmest part of your refrigerator is the safest place for mayonnaise.

If you're planning to give your family hot biscuits on Sunday noon, mix your dry ingredients with the fat the day before. Keep the mixture in the ice-box overnight. On Sunday all you have to do is to add the liquid, roll out the dough and slip the biscuits in the oven. Some cooks go even farther than that. They arrange the biscuits in pans for baking and put these pans in the refrigerator, all ready but the baking. You can do the same with cookies and even with ginger cakes. But in general, if you are planning to have cake for Sunday noon, you may just as well make it on Saturday. And by the way, a big, beautiful layer cake makes a very nice Sunday dessert and deserves a place of importance on your day-before list.

Now about meats. Of course, you can cook a ham or a chicken or a roast the day before and serve it cold on Sunday. But many people cling to the idea of hot meat for this occasion. You can have your choice of broiled meats like steaks and chops and so on, or you can use creamed meats or meats served in gravy that you cook the day before and just heat up in the double boiler on Sunday. Creamed chicken and mushrooms or sweetbreads; chopped cooked lamb and gravy; a curry mixture served in a rice ring; or a ham gumbo -- all these are possibilities of this sort.

Well, here's an after-church Sunday menu to illustrate some of those points. Creamed chicken fixed on Saturday ready to re-heat on Sunday; Hot biscuits mixed on Saturday; Jellied vegetable salad containing tomatoes, cooked peas, cabbage and spaghetti -- very inexpensive; Curled celery and radish roses, prepared the day before and crisped in the refrigerator overnight; for dessert, White layer cake spread with jam just before serving; and Coffee.

